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FOR EPA ADMINISTRATOR TRAIN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CCMS, SENV, ENRG, SWEL

SUBJ: CCMS: SPING PLENARY -- ROUND TABLE

REF: (A) STATE 81206

SUMMARY: CCMS ROUND TABLE FEATURED DISCUSSION OF TOPIC
"ASSESSMENT OF POLLUTION HAZARDS AND DETERMINATION OF
ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS." SUBSTANTIVE FOCUS TOWARD WHICH
TWELVE DELEGATIONS CONTRIBUTED CENTERED ON DILUTION/DIS-
PERSION APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AS AGAINST
CONTAINMENT APPROACH, AS WELL AS HOW BEST TO INCORPORATE
COST/BENEFIT/RISK ANALYSIS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-
MAKING PROCESS. WITH EXCEPTION OF UK, WHICH HAD PROPOSED
THIS TOPIC, ALL OTHER PARTICIPANTS SEEMED TO FAVOR SOME
FORM OF CONTAINMENT, IN PARTICULAR CANADA, DENMARK, FRG,
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ITALY, NETHERLANDS, NORWAY AND US; WITH BELGIUM, FRANCE,
GREECE, AND PORTUGAL SOMEWHAT LESS COMMITTED TO THAT APPROACH.
MOST AMONG PROCONTAINMENT GROUP, ESPECIALLY FRG, ALSO
STRESSED LIMITS OF COSTBENEFIT/RISK PHILOSOPHY. PRIOR

CIRCULATION OF COUNTRY PAPERS HELPED PROMOTE LIVELY EXCHANGE ON SUCH ISSUES AS POSSIBILITY OF "ZERO POLLUTION," EFFECT OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES, AND DIFFERENCES IN APPROACH TO POTENTIALLY TOXIC SUBSTANCES IN EXTERNAL AS AGAINST WORKING ENCIRONMENT. EFFECT OF DISCUSSION WAS TO AIR MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING ISSUES WHICH WERE BEING TACKLED BY NATO MEMBER-COUNTRIES INDIVIDUALLY AND IN LIGHT OF THEIR PARTICULAR ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY. PARTICIPANTS SEEMED SATISFIED THAT EFFORT TO PREPARE COUNTRY PAPERS BEFOREHAND AND ROUND TABLE EXCHANGE ITSELF WERE WELL WORTHWHILE IN SPITE OF RELATIVELY BRIEF TIME AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSION OF SUCH WIDE-RANGING SUBJECT. END SUMMARY.

1. PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF DISCUSSION:

AFTER ACTING CHAIRMAN, PROF. N.OZDAS, INTRODUCED SUBJECT, UK (FAIRCLOUGH) SET FRAMEWORK BY POSING TWO QUESTIONS: (A) WHAT CONSTITUTES A POLLUTION HAZARD? AND (B) HOW CAN WE FIX ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AT A REALISTIC LEVEL? HIS ANSWERS TO THESE WERE CONSISTENT WITH THESIS IN PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED UK PAPER, NAMELY THAT DEFINITION OF POLLUTION HAZARD WAS EXTREMELY COMPLEX ISSUE ON WHICH INFORMATION OFTEN SCANTY AND INCONCLUSIVE. THUS, IN SETTING STANDARDS COST/BENEFIT/ RISK ANALYSIS WAS PREFERRED UK APPROACH, WITH ULTIMATE DECISION A POLITICAL ONE. UK ALSO CONTENDED THAT PUBLIC OPINION OFTEN AT VARIANCE WITH ACCEPTED SCIENTIFIC VIEW AND ONLY RARELY DID EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO RISK REFLECT ANY ESTABLISHED FACTS, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM.

2. CANADA (EDGEWORTH) GAVE CLEAREST STATEMENT OF GROUP WHICH IN ONE RESPECT OR ANOTHER DIFFERED WITH UK APPROACH, ESPECIALLY AS TO TOTAL VALIDITY OF COST/BENEFIT/RISK ANALYSIS IN ARRIVING AT AN ENVIRONMENTALLY-ACCEPTABLE DECISION. EDGEWORTH SAID THERE WERE TWO BASIC POLLUTION CONTROL PHILOSOPHIES, ONE BASED ON DILUTION AND DISPERSION, THE OTHER ON CONTAINMENT AT SOURCE. UNCLASSIFIED

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CANADA HAD OPTED FOR THE LATTER. HE THEN OUTLINED ESSENCE OF BOTH APPROACHES, INDICATING THAT EFFECT OF DILUTION/ DISPERSION ROUTE MIGHT SIMPLY BE TO MOVE POLLUTION PROBLEM AROUND INSTEAD OF SOLVING IT, WHILE NUB OF CONTAINMENT APPROACH WAS PRUDENCE. CANADA IMPLEMENTS CONTAINMENT POLICY IN THREE WASYS: (A) BY APPLYING AS MINIMUM "BEST PRACTICABLE TECHNOLOGY" APPROACH; (B) BY USING, WHERE NECESSARY "AIR OR WATER MANAGEMENT" APPROACH; AND (C) WHERE MERITED IN EXTREME CASES, BY REQUIRING ZERO DISCHARGE, AS IN CASE OF POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS (PCBS). HE THEN OUTLINED LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY, AND CONSULTATIVE STEPS, INCLUDING NEW ENCIRONMENTAL CONTAINMENTS ACT, BY WHICH CANADA CARRIES OUT CLEAN AIR AND WATER OBJECTIVES AND GUARDS AGAINST

HARMFUL CONTAMINANTS. INCLUDED IN PROCESS IS CLOSE
CONSULTATION WITH INDUSTRY SO AS NOT TO REPLACE ENVIRON-
MENTAL ABUSE WITH ECONOMIC HARDSHIP BUT TO PROVIDE A
UNIFORM SET OF BASELINE STANDARDS EFFECTIVE ACROSS CANADA.

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3. FRG (HARTKOPF), DENMARK (STEENSBERG), ITALY (CORTELLESA),
NORWAY (LYKKE), AND US (BARNUM AND BRANDS) GAVE STRONG
SUPPORT TO CONTAINMENT PHILOSOPHY. FRG PHILOSOPHY ON
ENCIRONMENTAL POLICY IS GUIDED BY PRECAUTIONARY ACTION AND

SPECIFIES THAT PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE AND HEALTH MUST
ALWAYS ENJOY PRIORITY WHEN WEIGHED AGAINST COST OF POLLUTION
ABATEMENT. IN NUCLEAR FIELD, PARTICULARLY, SAFETY FROM ANY
CONCEIVABLE RISK HAS ABSOLUTE PRIORITY. FRG ALSO SUPPORTED
INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS, INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION
PROGRAM OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY RECENTLY
ADOPTED EC COUNCIL DIRECTIVE ON HARMFUL WATER POLLUTION
(ENV 131). DENMARK STRESSED THAT WAITING FOR ABSOLUTE
PROOF OF DOSE-EFFECT RELATIONSHIP WOULD NOT PERMIT ADVANCING
ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES SUFFICIENTLY TO GIVE THEM A TRULY
PREVENTATIVE CHARACTER. ACCORDINGLY, HUMAN HEALTH ASPECTS
MUST BE WEIGHED AGAINST THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS
OF SOCIETY IN PURSUING POTENTIALLY HARMFUL ACTIVITIES.
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DENMARK ALSO PUT GREAT EMPHASIS ON GIVIING EXTENSIVE INFORM-
ATION TO THE PUBLIC AND ATTEMPTING TO HAVE AN OPEN
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS ON ENCIRONMENTAL ISSUES.

4. ITALY INDICATED GENERAL PHILOSOPHY THAT, POLLUTION
SHOULD BE KEPT AS LOW AS POSSIBLE, GOING TO ZERO POLLUTION
IN THE FUTURE. CONCEDING THAT ECONOMIC FACTORS EXERCISE
TEMPORARY CONSTRAINTS ON SUCH DEVELOPMENT, SPEED OF APPROACH
TO ZERO POLLUTION SHOULD NONETHELESS BE GREATER FOR MORE
DANGEROUS POLLUTANTS. NORWAY EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR CANADIAN
DEFINITION OF BASIC ISSUE AS BETWEEN DISPERSAL AND CONTAIN-
MENT, AND SIGNIFIED STRONG PREFERENCE FOR LATTER APPROACH.
THIS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN NORWEGIAN LEGISLATION TO BE
ENACTED THIS YEAR AND NEXT, WITH EMPHASIS ON POLLUTION
CONTROL POLICIES WHICH REDUCE POTENTIAL FOR DAMAGE EFFECTS
ON HUMAN HEALTH, ON NATURE, AND ON CONDITIONALLY RENEWABLE
RESOURCES. NORWAY GAVE STRONG PITCH TO CONTROL INTERNATIONAL-
LY-INDUCED POLLUTION, E.G., POLLUTING SUBSTANCES IN INTER-
NATIONAL FOOD CHAINS ; MARINE POLLUTION WITH POTENTIAL
EFFECTS ON PRODUCTION CAPACITY OF SEA; INCREASING ACIDEIFCA-
TION AND CREATION FO PHOTOCHEMICAL EXIDANTS AND OTHER
CHEMICAL CHANGES IN TMOSPHERE; AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS
OF ENERGY PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION, INCLUDING POTENTIAL
CLIMATE CHANGES. NORWAY CITED ESPECIALLY POLLUTANT FALLOUT IN
SCANDINAVIA FROM COMBUSTION OF FOSSIL FUELS IN EUROPE, AND
RECENT LETTER FROM NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT TO EC COMMISSION
PROTESTING AGAINST IMPACTS ON POLLUTION SITUATION IN
COUNTRIES OUTSIDE EC FROM RELIANCE ON DISPERSAL INSTEAD
OF CONTAINMENT OF EMISSIONS OF ACID SUBSTANCES.

5. US (BARNUM) EXPRESSED EPA ADMINISTRATOR TRAIN'S
REGRET AT NOT BEING ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS DISCUSSION
BECAUSE OF COMMITMENTS IN WASHINGTON IN CONNECTION WITH
CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON CLEAN AIR ACT AMENDMENTS. COMMENTING
ON UK APPROACH, HE NOTED THAT US OBJECTIVE IS TO MOVE,
WHETHER BY CONGRESSIONAL ANACTMENT OR BY GENERAL AUTHOORITY
OF REGULATORY AGENCIES, TO MORE STRINGENT STANDARDS OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. INDEED, INDIVIDUAL STATES, E.G.,
CALIFORNIA IN CASE OF CLEAN AIR, HAD AUTHORITY TO AND IN
FACT DO IMPOSE MORE STRINGENT STANDARDS THAN FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT. US DEPARTMENT OF WRANSPORTATION ALSO EXERCISES
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AUTHOTITY TO IMPOSE MORE RIGIOROUS STANDARDS ON CONSTRUCTION
OF HIGHWAYS, AIRPORTS, AND BRIDGES, ESPECIALLY WHERE PARK-
LAND MIGHT BE AFFECTED. EPA'S BRANDS, DAA FOR PLANNING AND
POLICY, STRESSED THAT US DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURE IN
ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS IS AN OPEN, ACCESSIBLE PROCESS, IN
WHICH ALL CONCERNED ELEMENTS OF POPULATION ARE INVOLVED.
THIS IS REFLECTED IN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PROCESS AND ESPECIALLY PROCESSING OF REGULATIONS SET BY

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY. OTHER FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES, INDUSTRY, ENVIRONMENTAL INTEREST GROUPS, AND GENERAL PUBLIC ALL HAD ACCESS TO DATA AND ROLE IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. A PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE WAS TO ADDRESS ISSUE OF HEALTH THREATS DESPITE UNCERTAINTIES AND OFTEN TIMES SERIOUS LACK OF DEFINITIVE DATA. US ACCORDINGLY LOOKED TO OTHER NATIONS FOR INFORMATION ON THEIR APPROACHES AND THEIR ACCUMULATION OF DATA TO ASSESS IN THIS TASK.

6. OTHER VIEWS: BELGIUM (DELHASSE), FRANCE (FESQUET), GREECE (COURNOUTOS), PORTUGAL (PINTO PEIXOTO), AND NETHERLANDS (VIGEVENO) APPROACHED SUBJECT MORE CAUTIOUSLY OR DEALT WITH MORE PAROCHIAL ISSUES. BELGIUM BASICALLY FOLLOWED THE PRINCIPLE OF ASSURING THAT EMISSIONS OF CERTAIN POLLUTANTS SHOULD BE STRICTLY LIMITED AND, IN CASE OF SENSITIVE PLACES, HISTORIC-CULTURAL SITES OR NATURAL AREAS - THAT STANDSTILL PRINCIPLE SHOULD APPLY. LATTER WOULD, HOWEVER, DEPEND ON BROAD INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS. BELGIUM NOTED THAT EVALUATION OF RISKS WOULD BE DIRECTED TO EMISSION STANDARDS AND THAT BELGIUM FAVORED USE OF LISTS OF CERTAIN POLLUTANTS -- BLACK, GREY, AND WHITE. IT SUPPORTED HARMONIZATION OF EMISSION STANDARDS AMONG INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS AND ALSO INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF EC, IN THIS REGARD. FRANCE SUPPORTED A PRECAUTIONARY POLICY ON ENVIRONMENT BUT THIS COULD NOT BE IMPLEMENTED OUTSIDE ITS ECONOMIC CONTEXT. FRANCE WAS ESPECIALLY SENSITIVE TO FUTURE PROBLEMS INVOLVING HUMAN HEALTH AND PROTECTION OF NATURE. AND WAS CONSIDERING INITIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SURVEYS THROUGH PENDING LEGISLATION. FRANCE WOULD CONFORM TO REQUIREMENTS OF EC DIRECTIVE ON WATER QUALITY, WHICH SET CRITERIA OF TOXICITY, PERSISTENCE, AND BIODEGRADABILITY. FRANCE CITED CCMS AIR POLLUTION STUDIES AS HELPFUL GUIDES IN FUTURE RESEARCH ON AIR QUALITY IN FRANCE, ALTHOUGH FRANCE ONLY UNCLASSIFIED

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SET AIR QUALITY STANDARDS FOR WORKING RATHER THAN GENERAL ENVIRONMENT.

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7. GREECE REFERRED ESPECIALLY TO PREINDUSTRIAL CHARACTER OF COUNTRY AND CONCERN FOR FUTURE ENCIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. GREECE CITED ITS PARTICIPATION IN BARCELONA CONFERENCE ON MEDITERRANEAN, AND FUTURE PLANS FOR LEGISLATION AND NEW INSTITUTIONS RELATED TO ENCIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND CONTROLS. PORTUGAL INDICATED ITS PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS WERE COASTAL WATER AND AIR POLLUTION, FOR WHICH DISCHARGE STANDARDS HAD BEEN SET. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL FACTORS DID NOT PRESENTLY PERMIT ATTACK ON INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION. INDEED GREATEST NEED WAS FOR DCONSTRUCTION OF 600,000 DWELLINGS TO ACCOMMODATE THREE MILLION PEOPLE MOVING FROM RURAL TO URGAN AREAS. ALSO NEEDED WAS CREATION OF ONE MILLION NEW JOBS. PORTUGAL POSED QUESTION: HOW CAN THIS BE DONE WITHOUT AFFECTING THE ENVIRONMENT? NETHERLANDS OUTLINED RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON PLANNED CLEAN-UP OF RHINE, ESPECIALLY HOPED-FOR ASSISTANCE OF EC DIRECTIVE, IN ACHIEVING THAT RESULT. OTHER PENDING ACTIONS BY INTERNATIONAL RHINE COMMISSION SHOULD ALSO ASSIST, ESPECIALLY PROPOSED CHEMCIAL UNCLASSIFIED

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TREATY, AND FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF THERMAL POLLUTION, RADIOACTIVITY, AND LONG-RANGE POLLUTION PROBLEMS OF RHINE.

8. GIVE AND TAKE: IN DISCUSSION WHICH FOLLOWED FORMAL STATEMENTS, UK SEIZED ON CANADIAN AND ITALIAN REFERENCES TO ZERO POLLUTION AND QUESTIONED WHETHER THIS GOAL WAS JUSTIFIED IF COSTS WERE TOO HIGH. UK CONCEDED THAT CONTAINMENT OF POLLUTION AT SOURCE WAS PROBABLY GOOD PRINCIPLE, BUT THAT THERE WAS PROBABLY ROOM FOR BOTH CONTAINMENT AND DISPERSAL APPROACHES. INDEED, EC DIRECTIVE ON WATER POLLUTION PERMITTED USE OF BOTH APPROACHES. UK CONTENTED THAT PUBLIC ATTITUDES APPEARED TO CONTROL NCLEAR PROGRAMS WITH DOMINANT ELEMENT "FEAR OF THE BOMB" BYNDROME. CANADA INDICATED THAT ITS PRESENT OBJECTIVE WAS NOT TO GO TO ZERO POLLUTION EXCEPT IN CASE OF PCBS, WHERE EFFECTS ON HUMANS AND FISH ARE CLEAR. HOWEVER, CANADA INSISTED THAT WORKING TOWARDS ZERO POLLUTION WAS VERY WORTHWHILE OBJECTIVE. CANADA STRESSED THAT SAFETY WAS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITH AND GAVE

EXAMPLE OF BEAUFORT SEA OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING AS CASE WHERE ACCIDENT MIGHT RESULT IN OIL SPILL OF TWO-FOUR YEARS BEFORE SALVAGE OPERATION POSSIBLE. PUBLIC OPINION COULD BE AFFECTED BY SUCH AN ACCIDENT.

9. US (BRANDS) POINTED OUT THAT US RELIED NOW ON A MIXTURE OF EMISSION STANDARDS AND AIR/WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES. US DID NOT CONSIDER, HOWEVER, THAT WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES WERE SUFFICIENT IN AND OF THEMSELVES. ITALY (CORTELLESA) REITERATED EARLIER STATEMENT THAT ZERO GOAL SHOULD BE A RECOMMENDED LONG-TERM TENDENCY. ITALY URGED CAREFUL AND SOUND ANALYSIS AS TO WHAT WAS REALLY POSSIBLE, INCLUDING CONSULTATIONS WITH INDUSTRY AND THROUGH INTERNATIONAL FORA. BELGIUM (RENSON) STRESSED NEED TO KNOW WHAT WAS MEANT BY BOTH WORDS "ZERO" AND "POLLUTION." AND SUGGESTED POSSIBLE NEW CCMS PILOT STUDY MIGHT CONSIDER ADAPTATION OF HUMAN BEINGS TO ZERO POLLUTION. BELGIUM STATED WE SHOULD NOT RESTRICT OURSELVES TO DILUTION/DISPERSION PHENOMENA BUT ALSO LOOK INTO PHYSICO-CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL INTER-ACTIONS. IT SUGGESTED AS MUCH OBJECTIVITY AS POSSIBLE IN RISK ASSESSMENT, AIMING PERHAPS FOR RELIABILITY AS HIGH AS 90 PERCENT BUT SETTling FOR 60 PERCENT AS BEING BETTER THAN WILD GUESS.

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10. COMMENT: ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION TOOK UP BETTER PART OF FIRST DAY OF CCMS'S TWO-DAY PLENARY. INCREASE IN NUMBERS OF WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS AND REAL, THOUGH LIMITED, GIVE AND TAKE DISCUSSION WERE HOPFUL AUGURIES FOR NEXT TOPICAL ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION, SPRING 1977. OUTCOME OF THIS DISCUSSION PROBABLY RAISED MORE QUESTIONS THAN IT ANSWERED, BUT TOPIC OBLIGED ALL PARTICIPANTS (ONLY ICELAND, LUXEMBOURG, AND TURKEY REFRAINED FROM ENTERING DEBATE) TO EXAMINE PUBLICLY BOTH PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE IN ASSESSING POLLUTION HAZARDS AND DETERMINING ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS.

11. EC MEMBER-COUNTRIES HAD ANTICIPATED THAT THIS DISCUSSION MIGHT RESULT IN REOPENING ISSUE OF HARMONIZING WATER POLLUTION STANDARDS ALREADY EMBODIED IN COMPROMISE EC DIRECTIVE, ENV 131. PARTICIPATION OF NON-EC COUNTRIES IN DISCUSSION, SPECIALLY CANADA, NORWAY AND US, HELPED CONTRIBUTE TO NON-POLEMICAL AND INDEED AMIABLE DISCUSSION. ALTHOUGH UK, IN PROPOSING TOPIC, RISKED ISOLATION IN CCMS FORUM, SUFFICIENT DEGREE OF DIVERSITY IN POSITIONS SET FORTH BY PARTICIPANTS MUTED THAT RESULT. INDEED, ALL PARTICIPANTS--INCLUDING UK--APPEARED TO AGREE THAT EFFORT HAD BEEN MOST WORTHWHILE. END COMMENT. STRAUSS-HUPE

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